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**1975/12/02**

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By JWF NARA Date 9/30/97

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

Ch'iao Kuan-hua, PRC Foreign Minister  
Lin P'ing, Director, Department of American and Oceanic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
T'ang Wen-sheng, Deputy Director, Department of American and Oceanic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Ting Yuan-hung, Director, United States Office, Department of American and Oceanic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Chao Chi-hua, Deputy Director, United States Office, Department of American and Oceanic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Shih Yen-hua (Interpreter)  
Lien Cheng-pao (Notetaker)

Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State  
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
Joseph P. Sisco, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs  
Philip C. Habib, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs  
Winston Lord, Director, Policy Planning Staff, Department of State  
William H. Gleysteen, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs  
Richard H. Solomon, Senior Staff Member, National Security Council *RHS*

DATE AND TIME:

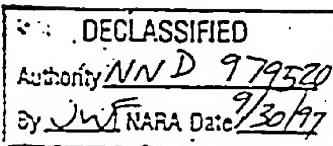
Tuesday, December 2, 1975  
11:00 p.m. - 12:00 midnight

PLACE:

Guest House #18  
Peking, People's Republic of China

SUBJECT:

Discussion of a Possible Communiqué;  
American Press and Public Support for U.S.-PRC Relations



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Secretary Kissinger (looking at Scowcroft): Scowcroft has me in a dilemma. Notice him moving in on me?

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: What about the communique? I believe the two sides are clear about the messages exchanged in the past. And since President Ford raised this matter, I would like to listen to any new ideas you have.

Secretary Kissinger: I simply thought we should decide at an early stage whether we should have any concluding document. If we do not, we should tell our press there will not be one and thus avoid the impression of a crisis where there is not one. I thought some exchange of views on how the visit might conclude would be useful. We do not insist there be something, but I thought there should be some discussion about it.

It also occurred to me that as you have already used part of your draft communique [tabled at the October 22 meeting] in the [Vice Premier's] toast, perhaps we might be able to accept the remainder. (Laughter)

Mr. Lord: He'll use the second half in the toast at the return banquet.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: We can lump the four toasts together. That would be a good document. (Laughter)

Secretary Kissinger: Any remainder will then appear in your next U.N. speech. (Laughter)

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: That is the principle [of physics] that the substance will not vanish.

Secretary Kissinger: What are your considerations now about the possibility of a concluding document? Should we have a statement? If so, what sort of a statement? Or should we simply indicate areas in which we will seek to work together? We have no draft for you; we thought we should have an exchange of views before we make any decision.

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Foreign Minister Ch'iao: Our ideas remain what we told you in October and in the messages exchanged between our two sides later on. We still maintain our views. If there is any communique, it should be a step forward from the Shanghai Communique.

Secretary Kissinger: But what is your definition of a step forward? In that [idea] we agree.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: For instance, each side should state its own views on the international situation.

Secretary Kissinger: That we did before. That is not a step forward.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: Because the situation is changing -- although our basic position remains the same, in the face of the changing situation we have new views. This is what we mean by a step forward from the Shanghai Communique.

About the points we have in common, I don't know whether we can add something to the Shanghai Communique. To put it in a simple way, I believe that the draft we handed to you on October 22 has in many ways made a step forward from the Shanghai Communique.

Secretary Kissinger: It depends on one's sense of direction. (Laughter)

I think the problem is -- I don't think we should have a debate [now] because we have debated it before -- we do not insist on a communique or on any public statement. In fact, we can see the advantages of having nothing.

Seriously, the problem is that you look at forward movement in a somewhat dialectic sense, as the movement of history. Our public will look at forward movement in a more linear sense; and they will make a specific comparison with the Shanghai Communique. This is what makes it a difficult problem.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: Well, from our point of view, you can say that a dialectical way of looking at things is that if we do not make a step forward, if a [new] document is not as good as the Shanghai

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Communiqué, then in fact it will dilute the significance of the Shanghai Communiqué. So that I think it might be more advisable to have no communiqué at all.

Secretary Kissinger: I think that may be true. Is it your idea that there should be no statement at all at the end? Or should we have a simple press statement?

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: As you mentioned just now, you also see the advantages of no communiqué; and I remember at our last talk in the other building [Guest House #5, on the night of October 22-23] I mentioned there might be some advantages in having no communiqué. For instance, Chairman Mao told President Ford that you could brief your newsmen and without a communiqué you will not be constrained in that respect. If there is a communiqué which is very dry, devoid of content, you will be constrained.

Secretary Kissinger: I agree with that.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: Apart from this, I think the understanding between us may be more profound than what our opponents will think. That is such a subtle way of indicating our relations that they cannot guess what they are.

Secretary Kissinger: In fact that is so complicated [an approach] that my associates cannot figure it out. You know what you said [in the Vice Premier's toast on Monday evening] was a repeat of the draft communiqué you handed us in October. But there are only five people [on our side] who understood that. I remember what Palmerston said of the Schleswig-Holstein agreement: of the three men who really understood it, one was dead, one was in an asylum, and he -- the third -- had forgotten what it meant. (Laughter)

Let me say something candidly about our press. I think you understand -- whether you agree with it in all details or not -- the basic thrust of our foreign policy. But our press got the impression on the last trip -- I have not talked with them on this trip -- that the Chinese side was attacking the U.S. position. And this explains many of the stories to which the Chairman referred about the impression of an increasing coolness in our relations.

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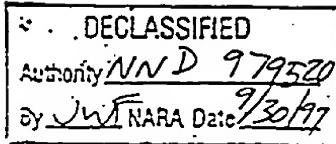
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Our situation is somewhat complex. I personally, intellectually, agree with your analysis of the situation. But as Secretary of State I must make sure to position our country in such a way that we have the greatest ability to respond to a crisis. Our biggest problem in America is that Watergate started an attack on central authority. We have to rebuild this central authority with care, and we must not fight battles where we cannot support our position. Therefore, speaking quite frankly, many of our opponents will use any issue to undermine the credibility of what we are doing -- articles they may hear from the Chinese side and which are useful to them -- and that would not be very helpful vis-a-vis the Soviet Union because these same people are attacking us for what we are doing in Angola, Portugal, Chile, and Iraq.

Therefore, if we want to create the impression of which we spoke this afternoon, one has to understand the impact on our press, even though I agree with your analysis with which -- personally, I do not disagree with what the Vice Premier has said. But while we each seek the same solution, you have your method and we must have our method, because a careful analysis of our domestic situation will show you that we are pursuing the strongest anti-Soviet policy that is possible. But it is not entirely up to us to say our relations are good, because if we say it and then our press interprets your statements which have a different purpose in a certain way, it [our statements] will simply be taken as self-serving propaganda. We are promoting the strongest policy against the Soviet Union that we can before the elections.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: It is a well-known fact that there exist fundamental differences between our two sides on key issues. Now we should not confuse these differences. The Shanghai Communique was written in this spirit. In recent years many American friends have come to China -- whether they be Senators, Congressmen, or friends from the press, and people from all walks of life. We have told them the relations between China and the United States are basically good. We have not stated to the contrary. Instead the sources of the stories about the cooling off of the relations between our two countries does not originate from the Chinese side but from the United States side.

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Secretary Kissinger: There are a variety of reasons and we have to analyse it so that we understand. It is true that, for example, opponents of the Administration or opponents of myself will say our relations are cooling in order to have a point of attack. And therefore after my last trip there were many articles in newspapers which were written for the purpose of discrediting the policy and for either preventing the trip or depriving it of significance. It is important for you to understand that these do not come from the Administration but from opponents of the Administration -- and occasionally from fools within the Administration who were fighting personal battles by making up stories that are contrary to the national interest. Also -- and I do not say this in a critical spirit -- some of the analyses our newsmen heard when they were here last time gave the same impression. So these two things came together.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: They have not heard them from our side.

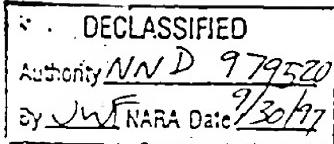
Secretary Kissinger: They got the impression -- it is newsmen. Part of the reason is that when you give your analysis of the Soviet situation -- I, for example, do not consider it directed against the United States but directed against the Soviet Union -- but some of our newsmen interpret it as an attack on our foreign policy, especially when they hear it in your country -- not otherwise.

I tell you this -- I do not at all object -- this does not bother me at all, in fact I think it is healthy for you to say the things you do about the Soviet Union. It is healthy for you to talk to the Europeans as you do. It is in our common interest. The only point on which I don't agree is when you imply that we might withdraw from Europe in the face of a crisis. The fact is that we will be fighting in Europe long after the Europeans.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: Perhaps this issue of substance can be discussed tomorrow.

Our policy on detente has been the same since 1971. It is not true that this is only in our recent statements. We have been stating our position on detente publicly and privately on many occasions. But it

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is also true. The argument we hear of a cooling off of relations between China and the United States has been in circulation only in a recent period. It is important to understand that it did not come from our government.

Secretary Kissinger: This is true, but it is also true that our newsmen have used the mood of their visits here as a peg to gauge our relationship. There were many stories last time that you were cold at the farewell banquet, for example. I did not feel this, and I have denied it. We have always been treated with extraordinary courtesy, so we have no complaints. But we would like the impression that our relations are good and getting better. Maybe -- you joked at the beginning that maybe we should publish our four toasts, but there is some sense in this. If, for example, at the final dinner each of our sides said among other things what Chairman Mao said this afternoon -- that our relations are basically good and we are improving them, then everybody would hear it and --

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: But Chairman Mao also said about the improvement of relations between our two countries, that they would be gradually improving.

Secretary Kissinger: A gradual process. We agree. I am looking to see what you have --

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: I believe that in our toast last night we also included a sentence that relations between our two countries are basically good.

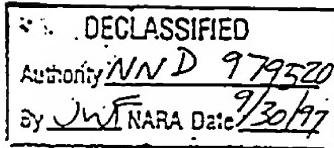
Secretary Kissinger: Yes, the President and I noticed it, although I am not sure our press noticed it. They were distracted by the cannons.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: We have to fire our cannons.

Secretary Kissinger: The problem is to get it across to our press in a way that overcomes their nihilistic tendencies.

(Chinese service personnel enter the room and place dishes of cookies and other sweets on the table.)

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I was getting weak.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: But your tendencies are that you will get bigger. You have put on a lot of weight.

Secretary Kissinger: You are actually responsible for it.

Then let us agree not to have a communique!?

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: We believe it might be more advisable if we cannot have a communique better than the Shanghai Communique.

Secretary Kissinger: Should there be no statement at all?

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: We have put what we think in all our toasts.

Secretary Kissinger: So then you recommend no statement at all?

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: If we cannot have a communique which is a step forward from the Shanghai Communique.

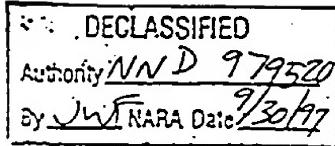
Secretary Kissinger: That is acceptable to our side. Mr. Lin (P'ing) and Mr. Lord are very relieved. They can get some sleep. (Laughter)

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: We are both also relieved of the heavy burden. Almost every time you come we have to have discussions about a communique; and actually I think it might be more advisable to encourage the new style we have adopted now. Either we have a communique which is more weighty than the Shanghai Communique or we do not have a communique at all.

Secretary Kissinger: I do not think it will be helpful to tell this to our press since we cannot get a new communique -- (Laughter)

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: I hope that our conversation tonight will not be leaked.

Secretary Kissinger: What do you think we should tell the press -- not about our conversation, but about our conclusion?



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Foreign Minister Ch'iao: But what ideas do you have, because we do not quite know your press? You are more skilled in handling the press.

Secretary Kissinger: You can tell my skill with the press from the articles they write! (Laughter)

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: I remember that in Shanghai you told me you could talk to the press for as long as one and one half hours without really giving any substance. You proved you could do it in Shanghai.

I still remember that you asked me what we should tell to the press, and I told you [to say] whatever you would like.

Secretary Kissinger: I will think about . . . we will, starting tomorrow we should explain to the press that there will not be a communique or a statement. I will explain that we decided to concentrate on the substance of the talks rather than take time out to draft fine points. And we will say that we reaffirmed the main lines of our policy.

I will brief the press on Thursday night after the banquet. I will express our gratification at the visit and say that from our point of view our relations are basically good and gradually improving. That will be the theme of what I will say.

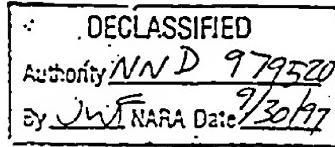
Foreign Minister Ch'iao: You may say that our relations are basically good and they will be gradually improving. Not in a progressive tense, because it conforms more to the reality [to put it in the future tense].

Secretary Kissinger: I don't even understand the difference. But it is acceptable to us. (Laughter)

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: Chairman Mao talked to you in a very frank way. He said there will not be major changes [in our relationship] either this year, next year, or the year after next. Your President also agreed with this.

Secretary Kissinger: I think he meant the year after next he thinks there can be.

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Foreign Minister Ch'iao: Basically that is --

Secretary Kissinger: There is one problem related to your point about the press writing that our relations are cooling. It is that if nothing at all happens in our relations on the sorts of issues that Habib and Lin P'ing are discussing, it will be taken in America by the press and public as a sign of stagnation. This should reflect on -- may have some impact if the things you fear in the world happen. But it is up to you to consider.

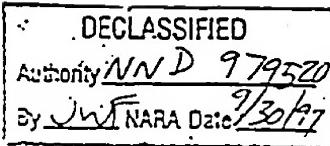
I could not care less if there are seven exchange programs, or two. Contrary to many of my compatriots, I believe China lived 2,000 years without cultural contact with America and can live another 2,000 years without contact with America. But this is up to you to consider; we don't have to settle it now, it is something to reflect about.

I was going to say that during most of those 2,000 years America did not even exist. In my limited knowledge of Chinese history -- Maybe we could think about whether there is anything in this category that could be examined and if so we could take it up, perhaps following the visit. If it could be said to have come out of the visit it would be helpful, but only if it is considered helpful to both sides. We do not need it.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: It is the same case with us. The problem is that we have to take a realistic approach to our bilateral relations. As a matter of fact, the biggest problem is that before the normalization of relations between our two countries the various programs for exchange between our two countries will have to be limited. I have told you this, Mr. Secretary, as well as many other American friends. Logically speaking, the argument about expanding exchanges before normalization is not tenable.

As the two sides are well aware, the issue of Taiwan is the key problem preventing normalization of relations. Once the relations between our two countries are normalized, the situation will be quite different. But we are ready to listen to your new ideas about the bilateral relations if you have any.

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Secretary Kissinger: I think they have been discussed between Habib and Lin P'ing. And we are always prepared, when your oil production increases, we will be prepared if you want to discuss some purchases. But you will let us know. We discussed it with the Vice Premier at dinner yesterday -- or to sell some equipment of a special nature.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: This is a question which we have to leave to the future.

Secretary Kissinger: It is up to you to decide.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: I do not think there are any new problems in our bilateral relations except the MIAs.

Secretary Kissinger: You told us you might give us some new information on this visit.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: Yes, we will do that.

Secretary Kissinger: Will the Vice Premier do that with the President, or will you give it us us here? Or how do you want to do it?

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: Not at the moment. Either way we will do it. It is up to you. We prefer the Vice Premier telling your President.

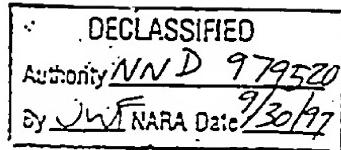
Secretary Kissinger: I think that would be best. Shall we then discuss philosophy? (Laughter)

Assistant Secretary Habib: For the rest of the evening.

Foreign Minister Ch'iao: Shall we call it an evening? We could go on to discuss the philosophical problems, but everybody would not be able to go to bed. Once I discussed philosophy with some European friends. We had a big fight and then at the end I gave it up. We should not discuss it any more.

Secretary Kissinger: We will see you then at 9:30 /a.m./ here?

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Foreign Minister Ch'iao: You will have a good time when you talk to your press about this trip to China.

Secretary Kissinger: Explaining to them all the signs of progress in our relations. But I will tell you, if you let in one additional professor from the University of Michigan you will keep Solomon happy.

Nancy Tang: We recently had one here. His name was Whiting, I think.

Secretary Kissinger: If you let Allen Whiting in, don't let him leave!

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